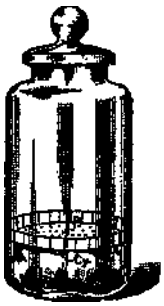
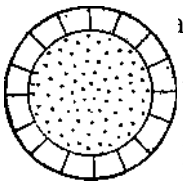
The Capture, Preparation, and Preservation of Specimens



For large moths and butterflies cyanide of potash and carbonate of ammonia serve very well, but it must be remembered that carbonate of ammonia bleaches insects which are green in color. It is well, in my judgment, to use a drop or two of chloroform in the jar charged with carbonate of ammonia, for the collection of diurnal lepidoptera. By putting a few drops of chloroform into the jar, the insect is anesthetized, and its struggles are made quickly to cease. The principal objection to chloroform is the fact that it induces rigidity of the thoracic muscles, which subsequently sometimes interferes with handsome setting.



In the preparation of the poisoning-jar it is well to use a jar which has a ground-glass stopper, and the mouth of which is about three inches in diameter. This will be large enough for most specimens. The one-pound hydrate of chloral jars, provided with glass stoppers and sold by Schering, make the neatest collecting-jars that are known to the writer. I have found it well to have such jars partly covered with leather after the fashion of a drinking-flask. An opening in the leather is left rated cardboard; on either side, permitting an inspection of the contents of the jar. The leather protects from breakage. At the bottom of such a jar a few lumps of cyanide of potash, about the size of a filbert, should be placed. Over this may be laid a little cotton, to prevent the lumps from rattling about loosely at the bottom of the jar. Over the cotton there is pasted a sheet of strong white paper, perforated with a multitude of holes. In securing the white paper over the cyanide, the writer has resorted to a simple method which is explained in the annexed diagram. A piece of paper is placed under the jar, and a circle the size of the

FIG. 47. —Piece of inside of the jar is traced upon it Then a disk slif fofpasting over is cut out about three quarters of an inch greater the cyanide m the jn diameter than the original circle *(Fie:.* 47). The collecting-jar.

paper is punctured over the entire surface included

within the inner line, and then, with a scissors, little gashes are made from the outer circumference inward, so as to permit of the foldmg up of the edge of the disk. A little gum tragacanth is